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ART. XXVI.—*Message from the President of the United States, transmitting, in pursuance of a resolution of the House of Representatives of the 30th January last, communications from the Agents of the United States with the Governments south of the United States, which have declared their independence, and the communications from the Agents of such Governments, in the United States, with the Secretary of State, as tend to show the political condition of their Governments, and the state of the war between them and Spain. March 8, 1822.*

THE late recommendation to congress to recognize the independence of those portions of South America, which have thrown off the colonial yoke, and the unanimous report of the committee of foreign relations, in the house of representatives, in favor of such a measure, will furnish the justification of the present article. It is no part of our purpose to discuss the political expediency of the measure; partly as the public mind, we apprehend, is in a good measure made up on the point, and still more as this subject will meet a singular fortune, if it be not discussed, at least to the true extent of its merits, in another quarter. We have too much conscience to add another to the harangues, which will be drawn forth from the public spirited gentlemen, who think it their duty to favor congress with their speculations on all subjects, and at the same length, and who, sometimes with a garrulous familiarity, do not scruple to force on congress the details of their private feelings and personal concerns, as the same may happen to be excited or affected, by public measures. Leaving, therefore, the discussion of the political question to the gentlemen so heartily disposed to engage in it, and granting that this is a subject more worthy of grave and deliberate discussion, than almost any which could come before congress, we shall proceed to lay before our readers a few statistical and economical statements, which may assist them in forming an opinion of its practical importance.

We shall suppose our readers to be acquainted with the general train of events in South America, and the general result of a long series of struggles and revolutions, of which the various details, as they have from time to time appeared in our newspapers, have, singly taken, been too obscure and insignificant to arrest general notice, though the impression left by the whole on the minds of the American public has, we think,

been unfavorable to the discretion with which the revolutionary movements in South America have been conducted. Had the mother countries been in a condition to oppose a prompt and well organized resistance, it is highly probable that the efforts to throw off the colonial yoke would have been wholly ineffectual ; unless we suppose, indeed, what might also have well happened, that a more formidable manifestation of royal authority would have had the effect of producing greater concentration and energy in the republican counsels. Whatever may be thought of this, in the last two or three years great strides have been made toward effective independence. The fine provinces of Venezuela and New-Grenada having separately declared their independence, and pursued with various fortunes the war against the royal armies, are now united into one state, under the name of the Republic of *Colombia*, with one of the most distinguished of the South American chieftains, Bolivar, at its head. The fundamental act of their constitution adopted at Venezuela, December 17, 1819, is among the documents accompanying the message of the president, alluded to above. The Spanish armies are wholly excluded from the territory of Colombia, with the single exception of the garrisons of Porto Cabello and Panama. The provinces of *Buenos Ayres*, on whose politics we made some remarks in our number for April last, in connexion with our notice of the history of those provinces by Dean Funes, have had no obstacles in the way of their independence to contend with since 1810, save those, which have grown out of their own factions. They formally declared their independence in 1816 ; and the view presented in the letters of Mr Forbes to the secretary of state of the condition of this republic, under the judicious ministry of Mr Rivadavia, is more favorable than any thing which has been known of them, since the revolutionary contests began. *Chili* declared its independence in 1818, and has sustained itself against the feeble attempts of the royal power. The late destruction of the remnants of the royal force at Callao completes the independence of *Peru* ; and the events which have transpired in *Mexico*, and of which curious details are contained in the documents accompanying the President's Message, seem to establish the independence also of that mighty region.

To assist our readers in pursuing the train of the discussions to which the measure proposed by the president may lead, we

propose to devote a few pages to some notices of the extent and importance of the Spanish possessions in South America; which, though they are to be found abundantly scattered in several works, particularly the invaluable one of Humboldt, and in a more condensed form in the work of Capt. Bonnycastle,* are less familiar perhaps than they ought to be to the American public.

According to the statement of Don Josef de Moraleda, examined in manuscript by M. de Humboldt, in the archives of the viceroy of Lima,† the southernmost point of the Spanish possessions in South America is the fort *Maullin*, near the small village of *Caremapu*, upon the coast of Chili, opposite the northern extremity of the island of Chiloe. This point is in $41^{\circ} 43'$ south latitude. The northernmost point of the Spanish possessions is the mission of San Francisco on the coast of New California, seven leagues north-west of Santa Cruz, in the latitude of $37^{\circ} 48'$ north. The Spanish dominions, therefore, extended a distance of *seventy-nine degrees* of latitude; exceeding the dimensions of the British possessions in India, or even of the Russian empire, and giving to the Spanish language a use more extensive, than that which is possessed by any other national tongue. Throughout this whole extent, says Humboldt, 'under the wise administration of the count Florida Blanca, a regular post was established, for communication from the borders of Paraguay to the north-west coast of North America; so that a monk at the mission of the Guarani Indians might carry on a correspondence with a missionary of New Mexico, by a rout almost without interruption, through the continental possessions of Spain in America.' We shall better understand this vast extent of territory, by considering that, from the southern point of Florida to the northern boundary of the United States, are but about twenty-five degrees of latitude; not the third of the extent on the meridian of the Spanish dominions.

These vast dominions, under the Spanish administration, were divided into nine great governments, which might be considered as independent of each other. These governments

* Spanish America, or a descriptive, historical, and geographical account of the dominions of Spain, in the western hemisphere, continental and insular; by R. H. Bonnycastle, captain in the corps of royal engineers. Two vols. 8vo. London, 1818.

† See note A, at the close of the second volume of the *Essai Politique sur le Royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne*, constituting the third part of the great work of M. de Humboldt.

were four of them styled *vice royalties*, and five of them general captaincies (*capitanias generales*.) The vice royalties were those of Buenos Ayres, Peru, New Grenada, and Mexico, and the captaincies those of Chili, Guatemala, Porto Rico, Caraccas, and Havana. To the latter was attached the region of Florida, before it was ceded to the United States.

Of these several governments, that of Mexico is unquestionably the most important. When we consider, indeed, the wonderful natural features of the whole of Spanish America, the unequalled magnitude of the rivers, and the stupendous heights of the mountains, the variety of climates in this vast range of latitudes, and the richness of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, we shall perhaps think it but justice to assert the first rank among the countries of the earth for this region. Several circumstances, however, unite to render *New Spain* the most important of these governments; and it is therefore to this portion of them that the remainder of our remarks will be principally limited, not only on account of its superior importance, but because, from various local causes, this quarter is the least known to the North American public. The superior population, the number of great cities, and their proximity to each other, the vast amount of the precious metals, and their influence on the commerce of the world, together with the favorable position of its ports both for European and Asiatic trade, seem to confer on Mexico or New Spain the right to this preeminence.

The appellation of *New Spain*, in its full extent, is applied to the region subject to the viceroy of Mexico, and extending from the 38th° of north latitude to the 10th of south. In these limits, it would include the captaincy of *Guatemala*, which, however, in point of actual administration, is independent of the viceroy of Mexico, and for its fertility and population may be advantageously compared with the most valuable portions of Spanish America. The greatest dimensions of New Spain, exclusive of Guatemala, are in length about 1800 miles, and in breadth about 1100. The isthmus, which unites the two great portions of the American continent, is so extremely narrow, that the project of an artificial junction of the Atlantic and Pacific has often been seriously agitated. It is unfortunate that the narrowest portion of the isthmus is not in that region, which, on account of the ports of Acapulco and Vera Cruz, and the city of Mexico, is of most importance, in a

political and commercial view. In the geographical introduction to his work on New Spain, M. de Humboldt has enumerated *nine* different places where the waters which flow into the Atlantic, might possibly be connected with those which flow into the Pacific. For the northernmost of these, M. de Humboldt goes as far as the Ungijah, or Peace river, in 54° 37' north latitude, and for the southernmost to a supposed communication between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans in Patagonia, seven degrees north of the straits of Magellan, which was the object of a Spanish expedition of discovery in 1790. The sixth of these points, viz. the small port and bay *Cupica* to the south-east of Panama, appears to be the spot most favorable, in the opinion of M. de Humboldt, to the project of a canal from ocean to ocean. From the bay of Cupica there is a passage of only fifteen or eighteen miles over a country quite level and suited to a canal, to the head of navigation of the river Naipi, which flows into the river Atrato, which in its turn empties into the Atlantic. M. de Humboldt gives to Gogueneche, a Biscayan pilot, the credit of having first turned the attention of the Spanish government to this point, which the same intelligent traveller says should be regarded as the Suez of America;—as being almost the only spot, where the chain of the Andes is completely interrupted, and a canal thus made practicable. When we cast our eyes on the gigantic communication between the Atlantic and the western lakes, so near being opened, by the unaided enterprise of one of our sister states, we may rejoice that this favorable point falls within the territorial limits of the republic of Colombia, which perhaps of all the revolutionary states of Spanish America, is that which has started in the career of independence, with the best auspices. Before passing from the subject of a communication between the oceans, we would observe, as a curious circumstance, that such a communication, to a very limited degree indeed, has already been opened by the art of man. It is the seventh of the points indicated by M. de Humboldt. ‘In the interior of the province of Choco,’ says he, ‘the little ravine *de la Raspadura* unites the neighboring sources of the *Rio de Noanama*, called also *Rio San Juan*, and of the little river of *Quito*. This last united to the *Rio Andageda* and the *Rio Zitara* forms the *Rio d’Atrato*, which flows into the Atlantic, while the San Juan descends to the Southern ocean. An enterprising monk, curate of the

village of *Novita*, caused a canal to be dug by his parishioners, in the ravine *de la Raspadura*. By means of this canal, which becomes navigable by heavy rains, boats loaded with cocoa *have passed from sea to sea*. This then is a communication from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in existence since 1788, and unknown in Europe. The little canal of the *Raspadura* unites two points on the opposite coast at the distance of seventy-five leagues from each other.*

One of the most singular, and at the same time most probable consequences of the opening of an effectual communication between the two seas, would be the arrest of the gulf stream. M. de Humboldt is disposed to attach but little moment to the assumed difference of level between the two oceans; and concludes his interesting chapter on this subject, with the remark, that 'when a communication shall be established between the two oceans, the productions of Nootka Sound and of China will be brought nearer, by two thousand leagues, to the United States and to Europe. It is not till this shall be effected, that great changes will be wrought in the political condition of oriental Asia; for this narrow tongue of land, beaten by the waves of the Atlantic ocean, has been for ages the bulwark of China and Japan.' It should be considered, moreover, what this celebrated author has himself hinted, that the effect of such a canal on the world's commerce, would be much influenced by the circumstance, that it would be controlled by the states through which it passes; and in the present condition of navigation, the passage about Cape Horn would not be relinquished, if that of the supposed canal should be much burdened with restrictions. It has been, we believe, an objection to the line of canals through the interior of Scotland, that the cost of insurance about its northern extremity does not equal the toll, which would necessarily be levied on the canal. In estimating the importance of a canal to unite the two oceans, M. de Humboldt has attached a value to the trade of the north west coast of America, beyond perhaps what it ever possessed, or from which, if it ever possessed it, it has certainly been regularly on the decline, since the date of his publication. It is well known, that a single vessel is chartered in this town, to transport all the furs collected at the establishment of the mouth of the Columbia.

The subject of the geological and other natural features of

* *Essai Politique liv. i. Ch. ii. p. 25. 4to ed.*
New Series, No. 10.

New Spain, its climate and meteorological phenomena, would furnish interesting matter of remark, but the limits of this sketch oblige us to pass them over. The singular circumstance of the elevation of the table land in Mexico, to which the greater part of the population is confined, deserves, however, to be noticed. One half of the whole surface of Mexico is in the torrid zone. But, as is well known, the degree of heat and cold depends not on the distance from the pole, but on the elevation above the level of the sea, proximity to the sea, and other local circumstances. Under the operation of these circumstances, more than three fifths of those parts of Mexico, which lie in the torrid zone, have a temperate or a cold climate; and a considerable part of the interior of the Mexican viceroyalty constitutes an immense plain, at an elevation above the sea of six or eight thousand feet, and in consequence, is a stranger to the afflictive temperature of the torrid zone. These immense plains, which stretch for hundreds of miles in an unbroken expanse, and at a height equal or superior to that of the Peak of Teneriffe, of mount Ceniz, and mount St Gothard are one of the most singular natural features of the country. The neighborhood of the capital is distinguished for a still greater peculiarity, in the rise above each other of four successive plains, each with its peculiar climate and productions. The highest is at an elevation of 8,529 feet above the level of the sea; the second at that of 7,459 feet; the third at that of 6,447; the fourth at that of 3,247. The lower plain is the region of sugar, the second of cotton, the third of European grains, and the fourth of the Agave plantations, the vineyards of the native Mexicans. The climate of the capital of Mexico is mild, and the temperature in winter is that of Naples. In the coldest season, the mean heat is from 55° to 70° of Fahrenheit. M. de Humboldt justly notices the remarkable advantage for the progress of national industry, arising from the height, at which nature, in New Spain, has deposited the precious metals. In Peru, the most considerable silver mines, those of Potosi, Pasco, and Chota are elevated near to the region of perpetual snow. In working them, men, provisions, and cattle must all be brought from a distance. Cities situated in plains, where water freezes the whole year round, and where trees never vegetate, can hardly be an attractive abode. Nothing can determine a free man to abandon the delicious climate of the valleys, to insulate himself on

the top of the Andes, but the hope of amassing wealth. But in Mexico, the richest seams of silver, those of Guanaxuato, Zacatecas, Tasco, and Real del Monte, are at moderate elevations of from 5,500 to 6,500 feet. The mines are surrounded by cultivated fields, towns, and villages; the neighboring summits are crowned with forests; and every thing facilitates the acquisition of this subterraneous wealth.

The population of Mexico is placed in a very favorable point of view, by M. de Humboldt, and one much at variance with the commonly received notions on the subject. We believe it to be the common opinion, that this and the other Spanish conquests in America, were almost wholly depopulated, as far as the native race is concerned, and that an arbitrary government, colonial oppression, and the unfavorable influence on the general condition of a people of an abundance of the precious metals have prevented the increase of a new population. Far otherwise. The native tribes have been replaced under the protection of the Spanish government, and at the present day, near three millions of the natives are found in New Spain, which M. de Humboldt is inclined to think equal, or not much inferior to the amount of this population, on the discovery of Mexico, and instead of diminishing, this race is found to be on the increase. The cruel policy of the *Mita*, whereby it has been so much wasted in Peru, does not here prevail, and the labor of the natives in the mines is perfectly voluntary. The cause of the remarkable contrast between the increase of the Mexican aboriginal population and the rapid decline of the same species of population in the United States, is to be sought in the agricultural habits of the former, and the abundance of the banana, whose spontaneous growth supplies the greater part of their food; while the subsistence of our North American Indians, by hunting, naturally causes them to disappear, as the forests yield to the inroads of agriculture. In addition to this, a marked contrast exists between the warlike temper and habits of our native tribes, and the peaceable disposition of most of the Mexicans.

No attempt at an enumeration of the inhabitants of Mexico was made before the year 1794. It was attempted in that year, by the viceroy Revillagigedo, but it was not entirely completed, and the population of some of the intendencies is given only by conjecture. M. de Humboldt has given a table of the population of Mexico, from the result of this enumera-

tion, preserved in the viceregal archives. In the corner of Mr Robinson's map, is given another table, representing the population of 1816. On what documents it is founded, we are not informed; it agrees, however, in the main with M. de Humboldt's. There are some great differences between these two tables; in particular, that which exists in regard to the population of Yucatan, we must ascribe to typographical error. The population of this province is stated by Humboldt at 358,261, while Mr Robinson gives it at 23,100. The error is in Mr Robinson's map. The population of Yucatan has been estimated as high as 465,800. The population of Puebla is given by Humboldt at 566,443, and by Mr Robinson, at 913,000. This last, we presume, includes Tlascala, which does not appear as a separate name in Mr Robinson's table, and is given by M. de Humboldt at 59,177. Mr Bonnycastle gives the population of Puebla at 813,500. San Luis Potosi, according to M. de Humboldt, has a population of 242,280, and according to Mr Robinson, one of 400,000; Mr Bonnycastle gives it at 334,900; and that of the two Californias is given by Humboldt at 12,666, and by Mr Robinson at 36,200. From the addition of the whole (some of the provinces being given only by estimation,) M. de Humboldt supposes, that in 1793, the population of new Spain was at least 4,483,529. But as authentic data, to which he had access in Mexico, convinced him that the population was rapidly advancing, he has placed it at 5,800,000 for 1803; and in 1806, he states it to exceed 6,500,000.* Soon after the last named period, the troubles in the Spanish American possessions began, by which the progress of population may have been arrested. Whether it is likely to have been so much diminished, that we ought to fix it with Mr Robinson at 5,660,000 for 1816, is matter of doubt.

Assuming the population to be somewhere between five and six millions, which we are inclined to think a very liberal allowance, the great proportion of one half or nearly one half is supposed to be native Mexican Indians. The remainder consists of Europeans, of *creoles*, or persons of European extraction born in America; of *mestizos*, those born of Spaniards and Indians; *mulattoes*, those born of whites and negroes; *zambos*, the mixture of negroes and Indians, and *negroes*. On the eastern coast are a few Chinese and Malays, who have

* Bonnycastle's Spanish America, i. 21.

found their way to Acapulco, in consequence of the intercourse between that port and Manilla. The European Spaniards amount to about 80,000, and the creoles to about 60,000. The former hold the chief offices, civil, military, and ecclesiastical; and are in general the only well educated portion of the community. This leads to a great jealousy between them and the creoles. There are very few slaves in Mexico; the whole number being given by M. de Humboldt at 10,000, of whom 6,000 are negroes, and 4,000 indians from hostile tribes on the northern frontiers, taken prisoners in war. The mass of the native Mexican population is free, being subject to no service or burden, but the capitation tax of about two dollars a head. They labor, however, under great civil disabilities, and intermarriage is forbidden between them and the whites. Some of them, according to M. de Humboldt, are in possession of great fortunes; although they retain the exterior appearance of poverty. By the plan of a constitution, promulgated by Gen. Iturbide at Yguala, Feb. 24, 1821, 'all the inhabitants of New Spain, without distinction of Africans, Europeans, or Indians, are citizens of the new monarchy, with eligibility to all employments, according to their virtues and merits.'

In his chapter on the checks of population, M. de Humboldt gives an interesting account of the diseases of New Spain, particularly small pox, yellow fever, a destructive sort of plague, to which the Indians alone are subject, called *matlazahuatl*, and the diseases resulting from famine. We have not, however, time to engage in this subject. The progress of the small pox has been much diminished, by vaccination, and the very curious circumstance is mentioned, that the effect of the cow pox as an antidote to small pox was, before the discovery of Dr Jenner, familiarly known to the peasantry among the Peruvian Andes, who had observed that those employed in milking cows in the Cordilleras, caught from these animals a mild cutaneous disease, which prevented their taking small pox. It is well known that the belief in this fact among the peasantry in Gloucestershire led Dr Jenner to his discovery.

The religion of New Spain is declared in the above named instrument to be exclusively the Roman catholic. It is somewhat ominous to the cause of freedom in the new state that the first article in this constitution is, that 'no religion but the Roman catholic is *tolerated*.' We presume this sacrifice was

found necessary to engage the clergy in the cause, whose power, if it equal their revenues, must be of great moment in the state. The ecclesiastical establishment consists of the archbishop of Mexico, and eight bishops; viz. those of Puebla, Guadalajara, of Valladolid, Durango, Monterey, Oaxaca, Sonora, and Yucatan or Merida.

Their revenue is raised by tithes, and is given by M. de Humboldt as follows.*

Archbishop of Mexico,	-	-	-	\$130,000
Bishop Puebla,	-	-	-	110,000
Valladolid,	-	-	-	100,000
Guadalajara,	-	-	-	90,000
Durango,	-	-	-	35,000
Monterey,	-	-	-	30,000
Yucatan,	-	-	-	20,000
Oaxaca,	-	-	-	18,000
Sonora,	-	-	-	6,000

The hierarchy of Mexico is accordingly one of the richest in the world, and will, we apprehend, in the progress of things be one of the first of the old institutions to undergo a reform. The bishop of Puebla is at present at the head of the provisional government.

The riches of the Mexican soil, exclusive of the precious metals, are well known to be unsurpassed by those of any other region. Among the agricultural products are those, which might doubtless become the source of greater wealth, than all the mines of silver and gold. Mexico produces wheat, maize, cotton, indigo, pimento, sugar, tobacco, the agave, cocoa, and the cochineal plant. It has the banana, the principal article of food for the poor peasantry, and the manioc, which yields the cassava bread, and possesses the valuable property

* This table is copied into the corner of Mr Robinson's map, as a part of that 'information, which, having had from respectable sources, and being confirmed by his own observations, he thinks entitled to much confidence.' Among others, to which Mr R. applies this remark, are the following very instructive statements 'The Europeans in New Spain are to the natives as is to 85. The proportion of births to the population is as to 5. The proportion of deaths to the population is as to 34.' The following valuable table is also found in the corner of Mr Robinson's map, published in 1819.

Population of the Missouri territory, in 1817,			
Do	in the state of Louisiana,	do	
Do	in the state of Mississippi,	do	
Do	in the Alabama territory,	do	

of resisting the attacks of insects. It produces the potato, tomatas, rice, and the ordinary esculents of Europe ; and on the table land the European fruit trees, such as plumbs, apricots, figs, cherries, peaches, melons, pears, and apples, are successfully cultivated. The olive and the vine are checked by nothing, but the illiberal policy of the mother country, which thinks it necessary to discourage their growth in the colonies, for the sake of protecting the wine and oil of Spain. Besides these, the tropical productions, as guavas, ananas, sapotes, mameis, oranges, and lemons ; vanilla, sasaparilla, and jalap, (which takes the name from the town of Xalapa, where it is found,) odoriferous gums, medicinal plants, and drugs, the dying woods, such as logwood, the fine woods for furniture, the silk-worm, honey and wax, and the pearl fishery of the coast of California, contribute their respective shares to the natural wealth of this favored region.

But the most celebrated source of wealth in this region is the gold and silver mines. The eleventh chapter of M. de Humboldt's political essay is devoted to this subject, and is one of the most elaborate and interesting in his work. Mr Bonnycastle has condensed into a few pages the most prominent general statements. The Mexican mines are, it is well known, the richest in the world ; and have long approved themselves as such, notwithstanding the imperfect and wasteful manner in which they have been wrought. Much improvement, however, has taken place in this respect during the last generation. The directors of the mines have, in some instances, been sent to the school of Freiberg, near Dresden, for education, and the school of the mines in the city of Mexico itself is now on a footing to compare advantageously with any similar institution in the world. The amalgamation and other processes introduced with such success by Werner, at Freiberg, as to prevent the mines in that district from being deserted, are fully adopted in Mexico ; and should it be possible effectually to introduce the steam engine, which the comparative want of fuel makes questionable, there is little doubt that, with the return of a settled order of things, the value of the mines will vastly increase.

The mining *stations* for gold and silver in New Spain amount to five hundred, and Humboldt supposes the number of mines, in all these stations, to be three thousand. The best and most productive of the silver mines are found at a height

above the level of the sea of from 5,900 to 9,840 feet. Three mines alone have produced more than half as much again as all the rest put together. These are the mines of Guanaxuato, Catorce, and Zacatecas. The quantity of silver exported from New Spain to Europe and India *per annum* is about one million six hundred and fifty thousand pounds weight.

Gold is generally procured by washings. It is found in abundance in the alluvial regions of Sonora, in the sands of Hiaqui, and in Pimeria, where grains of a very large size have been discovered. It is also found in the mines of Oaxaca and elsewhere in veins. The produce of gold in New Spain is stated by M. de Humboldt to amount, in the most favorable years, to one million of dollars, and the produce of the silver to twenty-two millions of dollars. Mr Robinson gives the annual coinage of gold at 14,000,000, and of silver at 50,000,000 of dollars. Mr Wilcocks makes the annual amount of gold and silver \$28,000,000; and we have heard it stated in a private quarter, which we think entitled to confidence, to amount to \$32,000,000 in the best years. According to the letter of Mr Wilcocks, it has been excessively reduced in consequence of the disturbed state of the country, and will this year amount to not more than four millions of dollars.

The richest mine in America, and of consequence in the world, is the *Valenciana*, one of the mines of Guanaxuato. The principal vein of silver ore, in this mine, is twenty-two feet in breadth; and as it is quite dry, it is wrought at much less expense, than the majority of the American mines. We have thought our readers would be amused with an account of this mine somewhat in detail, in the words of M. de Humboldt. ‘The *Valenciana*,’ says he,* ‘offers an example almost unique of a mine, which for forty years has never yielded its proprietors less than two or three millions of francs (400,000 or 600,000 dollars) annual profit. It appears that the portion of the vein of Guanaxuato, which runs from Tepeyac to the north-west, had been partially wrought to the close of the sixteenth century. Since that period, this whole region had been neglected, and it was not till 1760, that a Spaniard, who had gone very young to America, attacked the vein in one of the points, which had been hitherto thought destitute of silver. M. Obregon, for this was his name, was without fortune; but enjoying a good reputation, he found friends, who, from time

* Tom. II. 528.

to time, advanced him small sums to continue his labors. In 1766, the operations had reached a depth of two hundred sixty feet, and the expenses of working the mine still exceed, by far, its product. Possessing the same passion for mines that others have for gaming, Mr Obregon preferred subjecting himself to any privation, rather than abandon the enterprize. In 1767, he entered into partnership with a small merchant of Rayas, named Otéro, little thinking that, in a few years, he and his friend were to become the richest individuals in Mexico, perhaps in the world. In 1768 the mine began to yield a large amount of metal. As the shafts were wrought lower, they approached the region, already described as the deposit of the immense mineral wealth of Guanaxuato. In 1771 immense masses of sulphuretted silver, mixed with native silver and red silver ore, were derived from this mine. Since this period to 1804, the Valenciana has not ceased to yield annually the enormous sum stated above. There have been years so productive, that the net profit of the two proprietors of the mines has amounted to \$1,200,000. M. Obregon, better known as the count de la Valenciana, preserved, in the possession of this immense wealth, that simplicity of manners, and frankness of character, which distinguished him in less prosperous circumstances. When he first attacked the vein, above the ravine San Xavier, the wild goats wandered on the hill, where, ten years after, he saw a village of seven or eight thousand inhabitants. Since the death of the old count, and of his friend Don Pedro Luciano Otéro, the property of the mine has been divided among several families. It exists in twenty-four shares, of which ten belong to the descendants of the count Valenciana, twelve to the family of Otéro, and two to the family of Santana. I knew at Mexico two sons of M. Otéro, minors, of which each had a capital of \$1,300,000, exclusive of the annual produce of their share in the mines, which was \$80,000 to each. We must be still more surprised at the constancy and equality of the produce of the mine de la Valenciana, when we reflect that the abundance of rich mines has considerably diminished, and that the expenses of working them have advanced in a frightful progression, after the shafts attain a depth of 1640 feet. The sinking and walling up of the three old shafts cost the first count of Valenciana near \$1,200,000.*

* To form an idea of the immense expense of working the mine,

it is sufficient to state, that in its present condition it requires annually,

For workmen of various sorts employed in the mine, \$680,000

For powder, tallow, wood, copper, steel, and other

requisite supplies, - - - 900,000

\$1,580,000

The consumption of powder amounts to \$80,000 a year, and that of steel for instruments of mining to \$30,000. The number of laborers in the interior of the mine is 1800; and adding 1300 men, women, and children, who are employed in labors directly connected with the mine, the number amounts to 3100. The direction of the mine is entrusted to an administrator, who has \$12,000 salary a year, and through whose hands \$1,200,000 pass. This administrator, who is under no check whatever, has below him one miner, three sub-miners, and nine master-miners. These officers visit the works daily, *carried by men*, who have a sort of saddle attached to the back, and are called little horses, *cavallitos*.'

Such is the most productive of the American mines. M. de Humboldt's chapter contains a number of very curious and instructive researches on every point of interest connected with them, particularly on the whole amount of the precious metals, which have passed from America to Europe and the east, since 1492 up to 1803, and which he estimates from the best data at 5445 millions of dollars. We will only add a fact, perhaps not generally known, that of all the mines in America, the government possesses but one, that of Huanca-velica in Peru, which has been long abandoned, and which formerly yielded a large quantity of mercury. The mines are all the property of individuals, who receive from government the *concession*, as it is called, of a certain extent on a vein or stratum, on the condition of paying a percentage on the produce of the mine. This percentage amounts on an average to $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the silver, and 3 per cent. on the gold. Had the boundary of the United States been established to be the Rio bravo del Norte, as it was claimed to be till the late Florida treaty, our territory would have been brought within a short distance of the capital of Mexico, and would have included some of the richest silver mines, in the government of San Luis Potosi.

We cannot forbear to make an extract from M. de Humboldt's

work, for the sake of showing the progress of refinement in the capital of Mexico. We quote from the translation of Mr Black, the value of which is diminished by the ineffectual attempts of its author to illustrate, confirm, and correct M. de Humboldt's statements, in his own notes.*

' No city of the new continent, without even excepting those of the United States of America, can display such great and solid scientific establishments as the capital of Mexico. I shall content myself here with naming the school of mines, directed by the learned Elhuyar, the botanic garden, and the academy of painting and sculpture. This academy bears the title of *Academia de los nobles artes de Mexico*. It owes its existence to the patriotism of several Mexican individuals, and to the protection of the minister Galvez. The government assigned it a spacious building, in which there is a much finer and more complete collection of casts, than is to be found in any part of Germany. We are astonished on seeing that the Apollo Belvedere, the group of the Laocoon and still more colossal statues have been conveyed through mountainous roads at least as narrow as those of St Gothard; and we are surprised to find these masterpieces of antiquity collected together under the torrid zone, in table land, higher than the convent of the great St Bernard. The collection of casts brought to Mexico cost the king \$40,000. The revenues of the academy of fine arts at Mexico amount to \$25,000 a year, toward which the government gives \$12,000, the body of the Mexican miners near \$5,000, the *consulado*, or body of merchants in the capital, more than \$3000 a year. It is impossible not to perceive the influence of this establishment on the tastes of the nation. This influence is particularly visible in the symmetry of the buildings, in the perfection with which the hewing of stone is conducted, and in the ornaments of the capitals and stucco relievos. What a number of beautiful edifices are to be seen at Mexico, nay even in the provincial towns like Guanajuato and Queretaro! These monuments, which frequently cost a million or half a million francs, would appear to advantage in the finest streets of Paris, Berlin, and St Petersburg. M. Tolsa, professor of sculpture at Mexico,

* M. de Humboldt having had occasion to make use of the distinction of the *race of Caucasus*, so familiar to the continental physiologists of the present day, his translator appends the following judicious note to the expression, 'Who are individuals of the race of Caucasus? The Europeans. So at least we learn from the context, where they are opposed to the Mexican Indians. This involves the theory of the mountains of Asia being the nursery of the old continent. Every one, however, will not so easily be able to understand Europeans, by this denomination. *Such attempts to elevate the style, at the expense of perspicuity, can never enough be reprobated.*' It is with some reason, therefore, that the translator has observed, 'that he does not suppose his notes to be of any great importance.'

was even able to cast an equestrian statue of Charles IV, a work which, with the exception of the Marcus Aurelius at Rome, surpasses in beauty and purity of style every thing which remains in this way in Europe. Instruction is communicated *gratis* at the academy of fine arts. It is not confined alone to the drawing of landscapes and figures; they have had the good sense to employ other means for the excitement of national industry. The academy labors successfully to introduce among the artisans a taste for elegance and beautiful forms. Large rooms, well lighted by Argand lamps, contain every evening some hundreds of young people, of whom some draw from relieve or living models, while others copy drawings of furniture, chandeliers, or other ornaments in bronze. In this assemblage (and this is very remarkable in the midst of a country, where the prejudices of the nobility against the *casts* are so inveterate) rank, color, and race are confounded; we see the Indian and the *Mestizo* sitting beside the white, and the son of a poor artisan, in emulation with the children of the great lords of the country.'

Many other facts produced by M. de Humboldt, prove the progress which has been made in Mexico in those refinements thought peculiar to old countries; but we must haste to close this sketch, with one or two additional statistical statements. We have already stated the annual produce of the mines, before the confused state of things now existing, at \$23,000,000 annually. The disorder of the government, and the difficulties attending the importation of mercury for the amalgamation process, have reduced this to \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000. Of the amount in value of other natural productions, we have but partial information. M. de Humboldt gives the annual amount of the Mexican sugar at \$1,300,000. The amount of all sorts of manufactures is estimated by him at seven or eight millions of dollars. The importations of articles of foreign growth or manufacture, amounted, in 1804, to \$20,000,000; and the exportation, exclusive of the produce of the mines, to \$6,000,000. The gross revenue amounted to \$20,000,000, of which 5,000,000 were from the gold and silver mines, 4,000,000 from the monopoly of tobacco, 3,000,000 impost, 1,300,000 capitation tax of indians, and 800,000 excise on the fermented juice of the agave.

We shall close this article, by a brief narrative of the late revolution in Mexico, taken principally from the letter of Mr Wilcocks to the Secretary of State, which is published among the documents accompanying the president's message. This

gentleman was well qualified by a long residence in the country, and an intimate acquaintance with it acquired by visiting various parts of it and conversing intimately with all classes of people, to give an intelligible and authentic history of this important event.

The Mexican viceroyalty was at the height of its prosperity at the time of the breaking out of the revolution in 1810. The population, now, it is said, reduced to four millions, then amounted to six. The royal revenue exceeded twenty millions of dollars, and the money coined annually at the mint, was, according to Mr Wilcocks, upwards of twenty eight millions. The revenue is now reduced to half what it was, and the money coined yearly to from five to eight millions, and the present year will not exceed four. Such were the consequences of a bloody and devastating war, which was carried on between the Americans and Spaniards. Among the most active officers, who supported the royal cause, was Don Augustin Iturbide, then a colonel of the regiment of Celaya, a native of Valladolid, in the province of Mechoacan, but born of European parents. The contest was maintained for four or five years with great animation, and an exterminating spirit on both sides, until the capture and death of Morelos, the republican leader, in the latter part of the year 1815. From that time the royal cause obtained an entire ascendancy. The people, however, were not subdued. Many leaders kept the field at the head of small bodies of men, from three hundred to a thousand strong, and the whole country was infested with bands of robbers. This state of things continued until the arrival of the viceroy Apodaca, in September 1816.

‘To this disinterested, good, and virtuous man,’ says Mr Wilcocks, ‘is due the pacification of the kingdom; his penetration, skill, and humanity having suggested to him the propriety of laying aside the arms that had hitherto been in use, and of winning the affections of the people by means of persuasion, pardons, and premiums, who without general officers, money, or any immediate expectation of establishing the liberty of their country, and weary of the wandering and wretched life they had so long endured, embraced readily the opportunity that presented of returning to the bosom of their families. No sooner was the plan adopted, than its wisdom became palpable. Entire towns and districts yielded to the solicitations of the agents appointed by the government for carrying it into execution, so that at the end of two years, all was tranquillity, and you could travel in every direc-

tion without escort of arms, except that of Acapulco, between which, and this city, [Mexico] the chieftains Guerrero, Asenio, and a colonel Bradburn of Virginia, that came with general Mina with about fifteen hundred men, had taken refuge and fortified an almost inaccessible mountain, from whence they made predatory excursions.'

For the purpose of reducing this party of insurgents, Iturbide was appointed to the command of the department of the south, and placed at the head of three thousand veteran troops, whose head quarters were at Yguala. This took place a few months after news had been received in Mexico of the revolution in Spain, by which the constitution was restored. This event created great alarm among the clergy and some other classes of people, who apprehended from it the destruction of their forms of religion. The constitution was not cordially acknowledged by the viceroy, and the reluctance, with which he submitted to it, disaffected many of his friends, and emboldened the Americans to renew their demand for independence. Iturbide had the penetration and the boldness to seize upon this crisis for securing the independence of the country, by a scheme that should unite in support of it the zealous defenders of the Catholic religion, the adherents of royalty, and the friends of liberty. He concerted his measures with the clergy, and secured their cooperation by assurance of of protection to their privileges and immunities. He secured also the cooperation of several of the governors of provinces, and on his arrival at Yguala, persuaded a great part of the troops under his command to join him in the undertaking, in the belief that the members of the government who were known to be opposed to the constitution, secretly favored it. He then communicated his design to Guerrero, Asenio, and Bradburn, who pledged themselves to support him.

Thus prepared, he made a public declaration of the independence of the kingdom, and swore it in a solemn manner at the head of his army at Yguala, Feb. 24, 1821, and at the same time, he seized and appropriated '*to the use of the nation* a convoy of about a million of dollars, which fortunately for him, was proceeding to Acapulco, to be embarked on board a ship bound to Manilla. He published at the same time what is called the *Plan of Yguala*, consisting of twenty four articles, announced as the basis of the constitution to be established by the Cortes, when it should be assembled. The leading

articles of this plan, are the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion without *tolerating* any other; the entire independence of New Spain; that the government shall be a moderate monarchy with a constitution adapted to the empire; that king Ferdinand VII shall be emperor, if he will accept the appointment and come in person to Mexico to take the oath, and if not, some other member of the reigning family; that all the inhabitants of New Spain, without distinction, Africans, Europeans, and Indians are citizens of the monarchy, with eligibility to all employments, according to their virtues or merits; that the person and property of every citizen shall be respected and protected; that the clergy, secular and regular, shall preserve all its privileges and preeminences; that all officers, civil, ecclesiastical, and military, shall remain on their present footing, with the exception that those shall be removed, who decline entering into the plan; and that the army should be formed under the style of the army of the three guarantees, from the protection it undertook to give to the Catholic religion, to the independence of the empire, and to the indissoluble union between the Americans and Europeans. Iturbide sent a copy of this plan to the viceroy, inviting him and the government to assist in its establishment. He named the viceroy, the Conde de Cortina, and the president of the Royal audience to compose the regency, and reserved to himself the command of the national army.

It is supposed that the viceroy was inclined personally to accede to the proposal, but his council, consisting of the members of the various tribunals of which the government was composed, as well as the principal military officers, were unanimously in favor of maintaining the existing government. Apodaca refused his consent to the violent and cruel measures which were proposed, and offered an amnesty to all the insurgents except Iturbide. The field marshal Linan was appointed commander in chief of the royal troops, and a numerous staff and formidable army were committed to his charge.

Iturbide in the mean time sent a detachment of his army, which took possession of the town and castle of Acapulco, and marched with the remainder in the direction of Valladolid. The people in all parts rose to support the cause of independence. An army was formed in the provinces of la Puebla and Vera Cruz, by colonels Herrera, Bravo, and Santana,

which took possession of the cities of Orizaba, Cordova, and Jalapa. At the two former of these cities, the independents took possession of a large sum in specie, besides a very large quantity of tobacco, in the government depots, the proceeds of which had been relied upon by the government as its principal means of supporting the war. The army of Iturbide soon increased to the number of five or six thousand men. He took possession of several of the principal cities in the kingdom, and was joined by their garrisons. He abstained as much as possible from violent offensive operations, and from shedding blood. In the subsequent military movements, the independents were almost uniformly successful. A clear narrative of these operations is given by Mr Wilcocks. After a short period, the principal part of the royal army was ordered to Mexico for the defence of the capital, and the male inhabitants of the city, from sixteen years of age to fifty, were ordered to be enrolled as militia, without exception or distinction of persons.

While these events were transpiring, a strong prejudice had been excited in a portion of the community against the viceroy Apodaca, and a report was circulated that he was in secret correspondence with Iturbide. A conspiracy was formed against him, which on the 5th of July was carried into execution. The palace of the viceroy was assaulted and he was made prisoner. The political and military command was given to field marshal Don Francisco Novella, and it was announced by papers posted at the corners of the streets, that Apodaca had resigned in his favor. The new leader was a man of an exclusively military education, and not qualified for the station which he was compelled to assume. He created a body to assist in the administration of the government, called the *Junta Consultiva*, consisting of individuals who had assisted in placing the power in his hands. Their proceedings were violent and tyrannical in the extreme.

Iturbide besieged Puebla, the second city in the kingdom, with so powerful a force, that in a short time, notwithstanding the strenuous exertions of the government to preserve it, it capitulated. He then moved a part of his army, consisting of eighteen thousand veteran troops, all disciplined in the king's service, to the neighborhood of the capital. Novella, although urged to surrender the city, and assured that he could not rely on the fidelity of more than a third of the troops

that composed the garrison, was determined on making an obstinate defence. The calamities which were apprehended at this juncture were prevented by the fortunate arrival and prudent conduct of a new viceroy from Spain. The course adopted by this office is thus related by Mr Wilcocks.

‘ Iturbide, after having rested a few days in Puebla, and partaken of the effusion of gratitude manifested towards him by the good people of that city, was on the point of leaving it, with the intention of fixing his head quarters near the town of Chalco, and directing from thence the attack that was to have been made on Mexico, when he received a letter from lieutenant-general Don Juan O’Donoju, who had recently arrived at Vera Cruz, informing him that he had been named by the king of Spain, captain-general and political chief of the kingdom, and had accepted the appointment at the solicitation of his friends, the representatives of America in the cortes of Spain ; that he had risked his health and life, and sacrificed his convenience, at a period when he intended to retire from the public service, without any other desire than that of acquiring the love and esteem of the people of New Spain, and without other sentiments than those of tranquillizing the disastrous inquietude that reigned in the kingdom ; not by consolidating or perpetuating the despotism that existed, or prolonging the colonial dependence, nor falling into the errors or imitating the defects of many of his predecessors, in supporting a system of government, the tyranny and injustice of which arose from the barbarity of the age in which it was established, but by reforming the ideas of the misled, calming the passions of the exasperated, and pointing out to the people generally the mode of obtaining with security, and without the horrible sacrifice they were making, the happiness which the illustration of the era in which they lived had induced them to seek after, and which no rational person could disapprove ; he also required Iturbide to appoint a place at which they could have an interview, and realize the sincere and ardent desire he had to prevent the evils and misfortunes inseparable to a state of hostility, until such time as the treaty they might conclude, founded on the basis of the plan published in Yguala, should be ratified by the king and cortes.

‘ This letter of O’Donoju, with another that he wrote to Sor. Novella, were sent by Iturbide to the Mexican government, accompanied with a proposal for the suspension of arms, until such times as the definitive treaty should be signed in Cordova, the city named by Iturbide as the point of conference. Novella would, however, hear to nothing of the sort, and the letters were declared spurious, notwithstanding that Sor. Alcocer, a venerable curate of this city, who had been intimately acquainted with O’Donoju in

Spain, proved to the junta the identity of the signatures, by showing others that he had in his possession ; which contumacy on the part of Novella exasperated Iturbide so much that he set off for Cordova, leaving orders with his generals for the immediate occupation of the towns of Tacuba, Tacubaya, Azcapuzalco, and Guadalupe, neither of which *were* distant more than half a league from Mexico, and all of them in possession of the European troops.'

A column of fifteen hundred of the independent troops proceeded to attack Azcapuzalco, which was defended by an equal number of royal troops. A bloody and desperate action ensued, the result of which was the loss of six hundred men killed and wounded, and the abandonment of the place by the royalists. A few days afterwards, while measures were taking to drive the Europeans from the towns of Guadalupe, Tacuba, and Tacubaya, 'an aid de camp arrived with a copy of the treaty of Cordova, concluded between general O'Donaju and Iturbide, and an order from the former to Sor. Novella, commanding him to obey him as captain-general of the kingdom, to cause him to be recognized as such by the troops, to cease all hostilities from the instant he should receive the order, and to adopt measures for the evacuation of the city.'

The treaty of Cordova, which was concluded on the 24th of August, *recognized the independence of New Spain*, and confirmed in substance the plan of Yguala. It contained also some additional provisions for carrying this plan into effect. It was stipulated that commissioners should be appointed to go to the court of Spain, to lay a copy of the treaty before the king, and offer him the crown, and if he declined it, to make the same offer to the other princes, in the order in which they were named ; that there should be immediately appointed a provisional junta of government, composed of the first men of the empire, who should administer the government according to the existing laws in every thing not opposed to the plan of Yguala, until the formation of a constitution by the cortes ; that the junta of government should appoint a regency composed of three persons, in whom should be vested the executive power, and who should govern in the name of the monarch, until he shall take the sceptre of the empire ; and that the regency should immediately, after being appointed, proceed to the convocation of the cortes. It was also stipulated that O'Donaju should use his authority, that the troops which occu-

pied the capital should retire, by an honorable capitulation, without the effusion of blood.

Novella and his advisers still affected to doubt the fact of O'Donoju's arrival in the kingdom, and the authenticity of the treaty of Cordova, alleging that all might be a stratagem of Iturbide, and on this pretext he refused to evacuate the city. Some of the municipal bodies, however, who had with reluctance acknowledged his authority, compelled him to send one of the junta consultiva to ascertain the identity of the captain-general. This envoy was fully satisfied of the necessity of yielding to the command of the new viceroy.

‘By this time,’ says Mr Wilcocks, ‘Novella was also inclined to succumb, and would have renounced his employ, had it not been for fear of the troops, he having lost all authority, and they having usurped the command, so that the city was in the utmost anarchy and confusion, and dreading at every instance a dreadful massacre and pillage, with which it had been threatened daily for near a month, and which would most assuredly have succeeded, had it not been for the proximity and number of the independent army, that cut off all possibility of escape for the European troops, whose idea was to commit all sorts of enormity, rob what they could, and take the road for Vera Cruz. Things had got to that pass, that it was impossible to confide in a servant, and dangerous to do so in a friend. Every thing like social intercourse was at an end. Those that could with any sort of convenience leave the city fled, and those that were obliged to remain sought security in their houses; so that, in this once populous metropolis, there was scarce a soul to be seen. In this state of things, the generals O'Donoju and Iturbide arrived at Tacubaya, and the former had an interview with Sor. Novella, in the course of which he gave him to understand the impropriety of his conduct in resisting the legitimate authority as long as he did, the impossibility of defending the city, and the certainty of the massacre of the Europeans, should it be taken by assault; remonstrated with him respecting the insubordination of the troops, pointed out to him the illegality of their conduct, and enjoined him to prevent the effusion of blood, by exercising the little influence he had with the subaltern officers and soldiers, in the understanding that he would not take upon him to scrutinize their conduct in the arrest of the late viceroy, but leave them to exculpate themselves in the best way they could on arriving in Spain. The following day news was received of the surrender of the cities Durango and Vera Cruz to general Negrete, after an obstinate resistance, in the course of which many lives were lost, and of the declaration of independence in the western internal provinces, under the command of field-marshal

Alexo García Conde, so that if the soldiers of Novella had before any hope, it now entirely disappeared, and, in order to avoid a disgraceful capitulation, were obliged to acknowledge the supremacy of general O'Donoju, obey his orders by evacuating the city, and march to that of Toluca, there to wait until it was convenient for them to embark.'

The declaration, soon after these events, of the province of Merida de Yucatan, and the surrender of two or three fortified towns, completed the independence of the kingdom. The castle of Vera Cruz was the only place which refused to surrender. The province of Guatemala has also declared in favor of independence, and expressed a wish to become a part of the Mexican empire, and it is expected that its example will be followed by the other provinces of the captain-generalship of Guatemala.

'I shall now,' observes Mr Wilcocks, on closing his narrative, 'take the liberty to add a few remarks, and to say, in the first place, that the revolution, which I have attempted to describe, is not one of those that have been accomplished by means of unbridled passions, cruelty, rancor, or revenge, but, on the contrary, has, from its commencement, been accompanied with brotherly love, patriotism, disinterestedness, truth, and good faith, so that the more I reflect on its origin and progress, the more is my admiration excited, and the more am I tempted to exclaim, that America has produced two of the greatest heroes that ever existed, *Washington* and *Iturbide*. Secondly, that the new government is established on a sure and solid foundation, the people being highly delighted with it, and the subordinate chiefs, officers and soldiers, having one and all implicitly followed the example of moderation, set them by their magnanimous leader, who to obviate strife, envy, and emulation, has absolutely refused the crown, and insisted that the emperor shall come from Spain, as he first proposed in the town of Yguala. Indeed, the plan there published has been adhered to, with the most religious scrupulosity, except the slight variations made in it by the treaty of Cordova, at the suggestion of general O'Donoju, and the empire is in consequence governed by a regency of five of its most distinguished and enlightened statesmen, (who have elected general Iturbide president, and appointed him commander in chief of the land and sea forces,) and by a convention of thirty-six of the principal personages in the empire, as respects talents, rank, and riches. The independence is to be sworn in this city [Mexico] on the 27th instant, [October, 1821] and the cortes are to meet on the 24th of February next, the anniversary of the declaration in Yguala. In the

mean time, the convention will be employed in enacting the most salutary decrees, and among those already passed are one declaring *the commerce of this empire free to all nations*; another doing away all the arbitrary taxes, impositions, and excises imposed by the former government; a third reducing the duties from sixteen to six per cent.; a fourth for the encouragement of the miners, relinquishing to them the quota of silver formerly paid to the king, with other imports, amounting to seventeen per cent.,* so that many poor minerals, that could not be worked before, can now be used to advantage; and a fifth recognizing and making the new government responsible for the debt contracted by the old one, of thirty-six millions of dollars.

How far it may be proper to class the hero of this revolution with Washington, time will show. At present, it may be regarded as at least premature to give him this exalted rank. His character has not yet been put to the test, which will enable us to pronounce upon it with confidence. We ought not to judge of his conduct by the standard of our republican notions, nor to forget that the people for whom he is called upon to act are not fitted by their education and character, and by the actual exercise of the privileges of freemen, either to govern themselves, or to be governed without the assumption of extensive powers in the chief magistrate. But the almost unlimited authority which Iturbide has reserved to himself, or what, under existing circumstances, is equivalent, which has been granted to him by a decree of the regency, can hardly be reconciled to the idea that he is influenced by no views of personal aggrandizement. He 'refused the crown, and insisted that the emperor should come from Spain;' but he has retained the powers of military dictator, yielding to the emperor but the shadow of sovereignty. In the decree above alluded to, founded on a law of the junta of provisional government, the powers granted to Iturbide as admiral-generalissimo, are enumerated in fifteen articles, the first of which is in the following words. 'He shall have command of the forces by sea and land, comprehending in his government the economical and administrative, according to the laws; consequently, all propositions of office, in both branches, shall pass through his hand, of officers and chiefs, from those of brigadier, inclusive, downwards, in the land army, and the equivalents in the

* We are not able to say with what correctness the duties on the mines, given by Humboldt at eleven and a half per cent, are made to amount, by Mr Wilcocks, to over seventeen per cent.

other branches. He shall propose also for the governments, of garrisons, commanders of provinces, captains-general, and shall countersign the despatches of all these offices, receiving them from the emperor, and passing them to the secretary of war for their progress.' He is besides to have the direction of military colleges, the inspection of the manufacture of gunpowder, arms, munitions and clothing; the charge of every thing relating to arsenals, artillerists, and manufactures belonging to the marine; to watch over the disbursement of the military treasury for sea and land, and the distribution of the funds of these branches; to be the protector of commerce, navigation, police, and the works of the ports; to grant passports and licenses for navigation, according to the orders of the emperor; he is to have the title of highness, and a guard of two companies of infantry with a banner, which shall present arms, and beat a march. His guard is only to do honors to the persons the imperial family. When he goes out, four body guards are to go before, and an escort of twenty men behind. In the court and residence of the emperor, the posts of the place are to do him correspondent honors. On his entrance to and departure from the fortresses and garrisons, the troops are to be drawn up, and the artillery to salute him with twenty-one guns, 'he having in every thing, by sea and land, supreme military honors.' That with these powers, at the head of an army devoted to him, and with the tide of popular opinion in his favor, he will be the actual sovereign, and that the nominal emperor, a stranger, and without a single tie to bind the people to him, will be entirely dependent, is sufficiently evident.

This remark on the uncertainty of general Iturbide's character may be still farther extended. Nothing can be more futile, than to indulge in conjectures as to the final result of the individual measures, which have hitherto been taken. That the general consequence of the revolutionary movements will be the independence of Mexico, can scarcely be doubted by any one, who surveys the proceedings of the cortes at Madrid, or of the royal viceroy O'Donoju. Equally indisputable we hold it to be, that the independence of Mexico, and of the other South American colonies, in proportion as it shall be finally established and recognized by the leading powers of the world, will give a spring and animation to commerce, scarcely, if at all inferior, to that which resulted from the original discovery of this religion.